

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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COME-00 TRSE-00 INT-05 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

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R 120300Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8700

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ASEAN, AG, ID

SUBJECT: THIRD MEETING OF ASEAN COMMITTEE ON FOOD, AGRICULTURE
AND FORESTRY

1. SUMMARY: MAIN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE SUBJECT SESSION
WAS A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE ECONOMIC MINISTERS ESTABLISH
AN ASEAN FOOD SECURITY RESERVE.

2. THE THIRD MEETING OF THE ASEAN COMMITTEE ON FOOD AGRI-
CULTURE AND FORESTRY (COFAF) TOOK PLACE APRIL 25-27 IN
JAKARTA. DESPITE THE FACT THAT FOOD PRODUCTION IS A TOPIC
OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO ASEAN MEMBERS, PARTICULARLY
INDONESIA, COFAF IS ONE OF THE LEAST VISIBLE OF THE FIVE
ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMITTEES. ACCORDING TO COFAF CHAIRMAN
IR. SALMON PADMANEGARA OF THE GOI'S DEPT OF AGRICULTURE
THE FIRST MEETING WAS DEVOTED TO REACHING AGREEMENT ON THE
FOLLOWING PROJECTS FOR JOINT STUDY: SUPPLY AND DEMAND
OF FOOD; PLANT PROTECTION; FISH RESOURCES AND MANAGEMENT;
FORESTRY MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION; EDUCATION AND
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TRAINING; AND ANIMAL FEED; FOOD SCARCITY RESERVE AND FOOD
HANDLING WERE LATER ADDED TO THE LIST. SALMON SAID THE
SECOND COFAF MEETING DID LITTLE MORE THAN REVIEW THE
PROGRESS OF THE JOINT STUDY PROJECTS. THE EMBASSY HAS
NOW OBTAINED A COPY OF THE REPORT ON THE THIRD COFAF
MEETING AND IT IS APPARENT THAT THAT SESSION WAS ONLY
MARGINALLY MORE PRODUCTIVE THAN THE FIRST TWO.

3. GOI MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE PROF SOEDARSONO OPENED THE MEETING WITH A CALL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FOOD RESERVE SCHEME. IN PERHAPS THE ONLY NOTEWORTHY RESULT OF THE MEETING, THE DELEGATES DID DECIDE TO RECOMMEND THAT THE ECONOMIC MINISTERS UNDERTAKE TO ESTABLISH AN ASEAN "RICE SECURITY RESERVE". THE RESERVE IS TO CONSIST OF A "SYSTEM OF COORDINATED NATIONAL RICE RESEARCH, INCLUDING THE EARMARKING OF CERTAIN QUANTITIES WITHIN THESE NATIONAL STOCKS FOR EMERGENCY REQUIREMENTS IN THE ASEAN REGION." RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNED FORMULATION OF THE DETAILS OF SUCH A SYSTEM AND THE DESIRABILITY OF SEEKING THIRD-COUNTRY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO EXPEDITE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RESERVE.

4. AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS PLANNED OR UNDERTAKEN AS A RESULT OF DIALOGUES WITH THIRD COUNTRIES WERE SUBJECTED TO A SOMEWHAT PERFUNCTORY REVIEW. THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION REPORTED THAT THE US WAS PREPARED TO UNDERTAKE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, PARTICULARLY, A REGIONAL PLANT/CROP PROTECTION CENTER; CONSERVATION OF FORESTRY RESOURCES; AND AN ASEAN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER. THE MALAYSIAN DEL SUBMITTED THREE ADDITIONAL PROJECTS (UNSPECIFIED) FOR CONSIDERATION AND IT WAS AGREED THAT THEY WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE US-ASEAN DIALOGUE FOR EXPLORATORY PURPOSES.

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5. IN OTHER ACTIONS, THE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED A SUB-COMMITTEE ON PROGRAM AND PROJECT FORMULATION TO "PRIORITIZE" THE COFAF WORK PROGRAM. IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH A SUB-COMMITTEE IN THE PAST ALL COFAF PROJECTS WERE ON AN EQUAL BASIS AND THOSE MOST DESERVING HAD NOT RECEIVED THE EMPHASIS THEY SHOULD HAVE. MOST OF THE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS DEALT WITH CLOSER COOPERATION ON A VARIETY OF

AGRICULTURAL ENDEAVORS INVOLVING ASEAN MEMBERS, CALLED FOR EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS OR REQUESTED FURTHER STUDY ON PROPOSED PROJECTS. ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE OF NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE APPARENTLY WAS WHAT SALMON HAD HAD IN MIND EARLIER WHEN HE SAID THE COMMITTEE INTENDED TO REORGANIZE ITSELF AT THE THIRD SESSION.

MASTERS

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